



# *Milwaukee County*

Supervisor David Bowen, Dist. 10

Supervisor Russell W. Stamper II, Dist. 5

For Immediate Release February 14, 2013

Contact: Velia Alvarez, Public Information Manager, 414/278-4230 or velia.alvarez@milwcnty.com

## **BOWEN, STAMPER RESPOND TO STATEMENT ISSUED BY SUPERVISOR ALEXANDER**

*Supervisors Say Statement is Invalid, Inappropriate and Politically Motivated*

**Milwaukee** – Supervisors David Bowen, District 10, and Russell W. Stamper II, District 5, have issued statements in response to claims by Supervisor Deanna Alexander that elected officials meddled in the affairs of the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner and led to the resignation of Christopher Poulus.

### Statement of Supervisor Bowen:

"The concerns of Supervisor Alexander are invalid, and they are an embarrassment to citizens who are truly concerned about the death of Derek Williams in Milwaukee Police Department custody and about the use of excessive force in our community. Her statement seems to add to a growing list of her statements and actions indicative of right-wing ideology, seemingly out-of-touch with this community, rather than working with the people and focusing on root causes. Derek Williams did not die in the back of a police car with the video surfacing a year later because of Assistant Medical Examiner Christopher Poulus.

"Neither I nor any member of the Board has ever demanded any 'punishment' for the mischaracterization of the cause of death in this case. What I and other supporting supervisors did was to demand that all high-profile case reports be reviewed by our Chief Medical Examiner before final release, so that a mistake like this does not happen again. Our position was expressed in a resolution, that she and every other Board member supported, except her friend, former Supervisor Joe Sanfelippo.

"Like any human, Dr. Poulus unknowingly made a mistake in judgment. But the police officers, in denying medical attention to Derek Williams the night of his arrest, committed an egregious offense and should be punished accordingly. This is not a time to be distracted, as police brutality is a real issue mainly affecting our community."

### Statement of Supervisor Stamper:

"The current public inquest is the appropriate process to determine what is just. A young man died at the hands of police officers while in their custody and they must be held accountable. The medically determined cause of death is homicide, 'the killing of one human being by another human being.' The assistant medical examiner's error in judgment, that the cause of death was "natural," was contrary to the evidence and required further investigation.

"Supervisor Alexander's statements concerning Dr. Poulos are false and misleading.

"First, she claimed Dr. Poulos labeled the cause of death as 'homicide;' he did not. Dr. Poulos labeled the cause of death as natural. It was not until one year later, when Dr. Peterson reviewed the case that he, Dr. Peterson, changed it to a homicide.

Furthermore, Dr. Poulos' erroneous labeling of the cause of death is what caused the investigation to be delayed at least a year.

“Secondly, Supervisor Alexander argues that County Board members pushed for Dr. Poulos' dismissal and attempted to micro-manage and to intimidate regarding employment. No supervisor made any such demands or political threats. What we did do is set policy to prevent such problems from happening again.

"Supervisor Alexander's charges are complete fabrications intended to stir up resentment toward the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.”

###